



Opening Words:

Hosanna to the Son of David.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

Today we remember Jesus entering his own city to complete his work as saviour: to suffer, to die and to rise again. Let us go with him in faith and love, so that, as we are united with him in his suffering, we may also share in his risen life.

Palm Cross Blessing:

Hold any cross you have or make the sign of the cross on one of the palms of your hand:

**God of all people and all places,
the cross is a symbol for us
of your boundless love and compassion.
Bless these crosses we pray,
the hands that hold them,
the homes that have them,
May they be reminders
of your great love for us in Christ.
Help us to take up our own cross daily and follow you;
In the name of Jesus our Redeemer. Amen.**

True and humble king, hailed by the crowd as Messiah, grant us the faith to know you and love you, that we may be found beside you on the way of the cross, which is the path of glory. **Amen.**

Bible Reading: Matthew 21:1-11 Jesus' Triumphal Entry

When they had come near Jerusalem and had reached Bethphage, at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, saying to them, 'Go into the village ahead of you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied, and a colt with her; untie them and bring them to me. If anyone says anything to you, just say this, "The Lord needs them." And he will send them immediately.

This took place to fulfil what had been spoken through the prophet, saying, 'Tell the daughter of Zion, Look, your king is coming to you, humble, and mounted on a donkey, and on a colt, the foal of a donkey.'

The disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them; they brought the donkey and the colt, and put their cloaks on them, and he sat on them. A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. The crowds that went ahead of him and that followed were shouting,

'Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest heaven!'

When he entered Jerusalem, the whole city was in turmoil, asking, 'Who is this?' The crowds were saying, 'This is the prophet Jesus from Nazareth in Galilee.'

Your Reflection:

What words or phrases speak to you? Why do you think this is? What might God be saying to you?

Nikki's Reflection:

What speaks to me are the words 'The Lord has need of them'. There are so many things we have need of today: Protective equipment for healthcare workers, ventilators, food for Foodbanks... That donkey was important but there was a cost for the owners, for the disciples being asked to do something contrary to their familiar. We too at this time are being asked to put ourselves out, to do something totally unfamiliar, to the benefit of self and others.

Bishop Dagmar said on Friday 'Any one of us should feel proud when we are NOT doing things we would normally do or enjoy doing or even have hitherto seen as a duty to do, because it will help and support the national effort in which we surely must play our fullest part. Unfortunately, we will make ourselves unpopular with some who cannot take in the severity of the situation, but this is a necessary price for serving our communities...' Our NOT doing is a national and Godly service. A challenge indeed to our desire to be DOING.

Jesus this day was with and in the crowds, celebrated as King, he then faced the lonely journey of Holy Week where joy and group celebration turned to isolation, rejection and sorrow. What a poignant time in our history to be walking Holy Week with Jesus...

But today, Palm Sunday is a day of joy! What are 'the blessings' of the day that you can say thank-you to Jesus my King for?

A smile: A teacher was walking around observing her classroom of children while they were drawing pictures. As she got to one girl who was working diligently, she asked what the drawing was. The girl replied, "I'm drawing God."

The teacher paused and said, "But no one knows what God looks like."

Without looking up from her drawing, the girl replied, "They will in a minute." 😊

In our wilderness may we all come to know God more. **Amen.**

Prayers of Intercession

Almighty God, we praise you as our King and Saviour. We thank-you for all the good things in our life...

Loving God, you see the pain of your nations. We entrust into your hands the world that you created and love so much, flood it with your healing we pray.

We pray for:

Healthcare workers, for their protection, that they may receive all the equipment that they need..

Wisdom for all leaders in the difficult decisions they have to make.

The vulnerable, that food, supplies and support reach them..

Those involved in supply and distribution of medicines, medical equipment, food and essentials..

Those whose livelihoods, businesses and finances have been severely impacted...

Keyworkers and schools supporting them..

Lord in your mercy: Hear our prayer

Healing God, we pray for:

All who are sick, all who are anxious, depressed and fearful..

The isolated and lonely..

Those who are nearing the end of their life..

All who are grieving..

Our own needs and frailties..

Lord in your mercy: Hear our prayer

Eternal God, we thank-you that you overcome death and reassure us of eternal life.

We pray for the recently departed..

For those whom we have loved..

By the Saviour's cross and passion,

Draw near to us. Save us and help us.

Comfort, restore and guide us. Amen

Our Father, who art in heaven.....

Closing Words:

Whilst we praise Jesus today, tomorrow, as we enter Holy week, we begin a sombre walk with him to the cross. We acknowledge that the very crowds who shouted 'hosanna' today, are soon to cry out 'crucify him' on Good Friday. May we never reject him, may our hearts always be open to Jesus the Holy One who went to the cross out of love for you and for me.

Hosanna to the Son of David.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest.

The Lord be with you

and also with you.

Blessing

The Lord bless us and keep us; the Lord make his face to shine upon us and be gracious to us; the Lord look on us with kindness and give us peace. **Amen**